

Religious Miscellany.

"Say ye to the daughter of Zion, behold, thy salvation cometh."

No. 24.

CARLISLE, JULY 4, 1823.

Vol. I.

SELECT REVIEW.

From the London Eclectic Review.

On the means of obtaining Satisfaction with Regard to the Truth of Religious Sentiments; a Sermon delivered at a Monthly Association of Ministers. By John Pye Smith, D. D. London, 1822.

No notion more pernicious in its influence, can be taken up by the young inquirer after truth, than that to which the differences of religious belief among real christians have sometimes given rise, or afforded a pretext, namely, that satisfaction with regard to the truth of religious sentiments is unattainable. The adoption of this error is a first and fatal step in the labyrinth of sceptical sophistry; and the mind having wandered thus far, is soon in its doubtful mazes lost. The individual must already have deserted the path of religious obedience, and parted with the docility of a learner, before he could embrace such a notion. Or else he must never have set out in earnest in the inquiry.—Dr. Smith has ably exposed, in the first part of this very valuable discourse, the common and principal sources of this error; and having shewn its fallacy, he proceeds to detail the means of arriving at such a moral assurance in this discrimination of religious truth and error as is compatible with the present imperfect state of our nature. His directions are brief, comprehensive, and axiomatic, well worthy of being transcribed into the common-place book of every theological student; and a simple-minded observance of them cannot fail, with the Divine blessing, to conduct the inquirer to assured satisfaction. We select the first direction, the first both in order and in importance.

"I. Our first, constant, and most watchful care should be, that our

minds be *rightly affected* towards the Blessed Author and Revealer of all religious truth.

"Religious truth is but another name for *thinking justly* concerning God. But it is directly impossible to think justly in relation to any being, if the state of our feelings or affections towards that being are unjust. A wrong bias of the passions, or of that secret principle which determines our desires and aversions, the seat of mental taste, the spring of temper and character, what is usually called in scripture 'the heart;'—a wrong bias of this will infallibly impress a wrong direction on the exercises of the judgment; and, the further it moves in the wrong direction, the wider must be its distance from the line of truth. Now every possible perfection, all natural grandeur, all moral loveliness, belongs infinitely to God. 'Who is like unto thee, O Lord; glorious in holiness? How great his goodness, and how great his beauty?' If the feelings of our hearts towards him are not those of sincere and fervid admiration, love and reverence, we treat him with injustice; injustice gross and shameful in proportion to the degree of its contrariety to the fact; and that contrariety is infinite. It cannot but follow that our sentiments concerning God, his purposes, his commands, and his operations, will partake of this inward injustice, this practical falsehood. It is the dictate of sound philosophy, not less than of revelation; 'They that forsake the law praise the wicked: evil men understand not judgment; they "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." There can be no *free inquiry* till the mind is freed from the worst and strongest of prejudices, the prejudices of a sinful state.

"He, then, that would have a satisfactory assurance that he is holding the truth of God, must cherish all right affections towards God. He must "walk in the light," and then "will he see light." He must keep ever fresh and lively on his soul the impressions of veneration and love for all the perfections of the glorious Deity, joy and gratitude for his dominion, a cordial and delightful approbation of his government in all its acts, and of his will in all its expressions. O let it be the object of our perpetual desires and efforts, to be practically conformed to God's approving will! Such communion with him is living in the very atmosphere of light, and it will shed a convincing brightness upon all the fields of nature and revelation. The value of religious truth lies in its being the real expression of the counsels, acts, and decisions of the Blessed God.—Devotedness to him will cause us to love truth for this very reason, and to study it, not as a barren theory or a refined speculation, but with that warmth of just feeling which is the same, in the matters of religion, as a correct taste and a noble enthusiasm are, in relation to the beauties of nature or the exquisite labors of genius and art. A Michael Angelo differs not more from the most grovelling barbarian, than does a holy Christian from an unsanctified speculatist.—'My doctrine,' said the Lord Jesus, 'is not mine but His who sent me. If any man would do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'"

We are anxious that this Sermon should not be considered as an ephemeral publication. It forms a most useful tract to be put into the hands of every student on his entrance upon theological inquiries.

Labor not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

A number of weeks have elapsed since we published any intelligence relative to the missionaries among the Indians, under the patronage of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This was not because nothing of importance had come to hand but it was owing to a crowd of other matter that it was excluded. We have several articles now before us, from which we will endeavor to give an abstract account of several stations under that Board.

Concerning the very important mission to Palestine, our readers cannot be altogether ignorant. In page 273, we published a brief Review of it from its commencement; in page 289, Extracts from Mr. Fisk's communications; in page 306, and continued to other numbers, a discourse of Mr. Wolff, in which was contained a brief account of his labors. As mention was made in our second number, of the appointment of Mr. King to the Palestine Mission,—of his preparations to embark in the duties of his appointment, &c. a short account of his journey to the theatre of his labors, may not be uninteresting.

Condensed for the Boston Recorder, from the Missionary Herald.

MR. KING'S JOURNEY FROM PARIS TO MARSEILLES.

[Concerning the residence of the Rev. Jonas King at Paris, his offers of service, for three years, in connexion with the Palestine Mission, and the acceptance of those offers, mention was made at p. 353 of the last volume of the Herald. Notice was also taken of the interest, which certain gentlemen in France and elsewhere, had manifested in his contemplated mission.

[We shall now compile, from the private journal of Mr. King, kept while on his way from Paris to Marseilles, such notices, as will be interesting to our readers.]

Paris, Monday, Sept. 30, 1822.—Took my seat in the Diligence for Lyons. After travelling several miles a gentleman, who had taken a seat with me, and who appeared to be

a very intelligent and respectable man, inquired of me, "why, on parting with my friend at Paris, I pointed towards heaven?" Because replied I, *there* is all our joy, and there we hope one day to meet. I then preached to him Jesus Christ and him crucified, and how the believer can look beyond this vale of tears, and behold with the eye of faith, a brighter and more beautiful scene, than was ever held here below, since the fall of man.

[The conversation was long, animated, and interesting. The gentleman was a disciple of Voltaire, and brought many objections against the authenticity of the Bible; which, however, were easily answered, and gave rise to a free declaration of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, on the part of Mr. King, and an unrestrained application of them to the heart and conscience.]

From this time, during our whole journey to Lyons, he treated me with much attention and respect. He also often aided me in the distribution of tracts, which I commenced at Essone, a little village standing on a river of the same name, and containing manufactories of cotton, printed calicoes, copper, and gunpowder.

Fontainebleau.

[Mr. K. arrived at Fontainebleau about 2 o'clock. This village, which has been the residence of many of the kings of France, and was a favorite residence of the Emperor Napoleon, contains about 9,000 inhabitants.]

Here surrounded with a guard of 30,000 men, on the 11th of April, 1814, Napoleon signed the abdication of his title of "Emperor of the French and King of Italy." The pen, with which he signed it, is still preserved, and shewn to the inquiring traveller. Here, also, he made his appearance on the 20th of March, 1815, nineteen days after leaving Elba; and, in the evening, entered the Thuilleries at

Paris, from which Louis XVIII. had fled.

[In this place, Mr. K. distributed his tracts with a liberal hand, and declared the interesting truths of the Gospel to all who came around him;—not without some fears, that the greatness of the crowd and the noise of their importunities and benedictions, would procure his arrest from the gens d'armes. They, however, suffered him to proceed unmolested; and, in passing by the palace, he threw out to them a tract containing "Christ's Sermon on the Mount."

[Having escaped safely at Fontainebleau, Mr. K. was emboldened to pursue the same course at Nemours, a village containing about 4,000 inhabitants, and situated ten or twelve miles beyond the place last mentioned. The tracts were sought with great avidity; and numerous applications were of necessity refused.]

Fontenay.

At five o'clock we arrived at Fontenay, where we dined. After dinner, I visited the stone bridge, said to have been built in the time of Julius Cæsar. Near it stands a small house said to have been erected at the same time. The stone columns in front of it, bear marks of high antiquity. Here, said I, where Julius Cæsar brought war and desolation, I will attempt to do something to promote the kingdom of the Prince of Peace. Seeing the man who now occupied this house, I stepped up to him, and, taking off my hat, said, "Sir, if you will come with me to the Diligence, I will give you a little book." An officer, who was near, and heard what I said, came with him, as I supposed to watch me. To him I gave two or three immediately, and begged him to read them for the good of his soul. He took off his hat, and, thanking me promised to do so. I never gave away a tract with so much interest and pleasure, as on this spot, where had marched, eighteen

hundred years ago, the foot of Roman pride and grandeur.

Lyons.

On arriving at Lyons, near all the passengers came and took me by the hand wished me a happy journey.—The gentleman, whom I first addressed on leaving Paris, I found to be a respectable merchant at Lyons. He had a wife and two interesting children waiting his arrival at the stage office, to whom he presented me, giving me, at the same time, an invitation to call and see him, if I ever returned through that place. The tracts I had given him he gave to his children, and told them to read them with attention.

[On Friday, the 4th. Mr. K. took the stage for Nismes. Here, as in a former case he was called upon to defend the authenticity of the Scriptures against infidel objections. The result was, that “three officers and one other gentleman, promised to send to Paris, and purchase for themselves a Bible;” and, on their arrival at Nismes, they gave to Mr. K. their address, and invited him to visit them.]

Nismes.

[They arrived at this place a little before night on Saturday. The next day, Mr. K. was introduced to an acquaintance with the Baron Castelnau, President of the Bible Society at Nismes, and with several Protestant Clergymen and respectable laymen, to whom he related the object of his mission, and what God was beginning to do for the conversion of the world. In the course of the day, he visited a Sabbath School, where were about 70 females from fifteen to 30 years of age, engaged in reading the Bible. On Monday, he attended the meeting of the Bible Society, which presented him with twelve elegant French Bibles to be distributed in the east. On Tuesday, he aided in the

formation of a Missionary Society, auxiliary to the one at Paris. A subscription was opened at the meeting, and 304 francs were immediately subscribed. To this sum, was added a donation from a poor widow, seventy-five years old, of 70 francs.—This poor woman had always labored hard, and, by the strictest economy, had amassed the sum above mentioned, for the purpose of paying the rent of a house, which she had hired. The gentleman, who owned the house, was a pious and benevolent man, and remitted the debt, and told her to make what use she pleased of the little sum. Having heard of the Missionary Society at Paris, she said, “I am about to die. I have neither parents, nor children. I will give this mite to spread the Gospel of my Saviour, before whom I am soon to appear.”—“She, of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living;” and it shall be told as a memorial of her.]

[The next day, Mr. K. called on Madame Vizie, (which was the name of this good woman,) to gladden her heart by relating to her what was now doing in various parts of the world; for the extension of the spiritual kingdom of the Lord Jesus.

Montpelier.

Called on the Rev. Mr. Lissignol, who is a truly evangelical man, and who takes a lively interest in all the benevolent objects of the day. He had just written to Professor Kieffer, to request me not to fail of coming to see him, when on my way to Marseilles. The letter was written about the time I left Paris. The moment I told him my name, (for I had no letter of introduction,) he seized my hand with joy, and gave me a most friendly welcome to his house.

He immediately wrote to the President of the Consistory to come in from the country, and then went and

introduced me to several families, who received me very kindly, and with whom we conversed on the subject of missions.

Mr. L. had already formed a Missionary Society, and said there would be no difficulty in making it auxiliary to that at Paris. He also entered into my views with regard to the Monthly Concert of Prayer, and said he should do all in his power to have it observed in all the churches throughout the Department of Herault.

Voyage to Malta.

[Very early in the morning of Tuesday, Oct. 29th. Mr. K. sailed out of the harbour of Marseilles. At 8 o'clock they were in sight of the Gulph of Toulon, and France was fast receding from view.]

I could not but feel some emotions on leaving a country, where I had spent one of the most interesting years of my life.

Land of science and of sin, of gaiety and pleasure! I bid thee farewell! The sun shines brightly on thy beautiful fields; the mild gales breathe softly on thy enchanting hills; and along the borders of thy streams, in the midst of vines and olives, lie scattered the cottages of peasants, and the mansions of nobles. Thou hast within thy bosom all that can gratify genius, and taste, and sense. O when shall the spirit of Massillon rest upon thy priests! When shall the light of millennial glory dawn upon thy population! With fervent prayers for thy prosperity, I bid thee farewell.

[Nov. 1st came within sight of Sardinia; on the 2nd at sun rise, Mount Etna was in view; and, at noon, they beheld the much desired island of Malta. The evening was spent in the company of Messrs. Fisk and Temple.]

Thursday Nov. 8th. Messrs. Fisk and Temple, and myself went to the

Lazaretto to see Mr. Wolff, the Jewish Missionary. He had just arrived from Alexandria, and had come for the sole purpose of finding Mr. Fisk, in order to return with him to Jerusalem.

[We learn verbally from Smyrna, that Mr. Fisk had arrived at Alexandria, accompanied, no doubt, by Messrs. Wolff and King. We have also learned, through the medium of Mr. Wilder of Paris, that the Rev. Lewis Way was at Nice, on the 3d of February; designing, by leave of Providence, to be at Jerusalem at the passover. The probability, therefore, is, that these four Christian Missionaries have already met in that most interesting city.]

SANDWICH ISLAND MISSION.

STATION AN OAHU.*

Feb. 6, 1822. Kraimahu called to see the family, school, &c., with which he was highly pleased. He is a man of business, but of few words. The semi-quarterly visitation to the school took place to-day. The scholars were punctual in attendance, and diligent in application.

10, Sab. Mr. Thornton preached from the words of Christ, "what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." The discourse was translated by Hopoo a native, as it was delivered, to a large concourse of people, who gave a decent attention.

17, Sab. Mr. Bingham preached in the forenoon, from the address of Jesus to his disciples, as recorded in the three last verses of Mathew, to a numerous concourse of people, chiefly all natives; in the afternoon he preached the same sermon at Waititi, at the house of Tamoree and Kaahumann. Tamoree had been sick for several days, and requested that Mr. B. would pray for him, that his weakness

* The name of this station, as appears from a "Brief view of Missions," given in the 1st number of our paper, must be *Hanuroorah*. as no new station has been opened since that time as we can learn.

might be healed; Mr. B. complied to his request, for which he appeared thankful.

March 1.—Tidings were spread throughout the village, that Riho-riho, the king, was dying at Waititi; upon which Mr. B. and Hopoo, repaired to the spot, and found, that he had been seized with an alarming fit, which threatened his life. The deep sympathy manifested by the great concourse of people assembled to hear of their sovereign's welfare was truly astonishing;—this probably arose from apprehensions of personal danger in case the king should die. Medicine was given him, and prayer made on his behalf, when he composed himself quietly to rest. He was again attacked during the night, but survived it.

2. He was removed to Hanaroora on a couch, where medical aid was afforded him, by the providential arrival of an English physician.

3. The king being nearly recovered, invited Mr. B. to take tea with him, to ask a blessing, and give thanks.

24, *Sab.* About three hundred souls listened to a sermon preached from Isaiah xlv. 22. "Look unto me," &c. The audience consisted of the king, five or six of the principal chiefs, and of honorable women not a few, beside the seamen in port. Although it might be imagined that the natives not knowing the good which would be produced by the gospel, or rather, the influence which it would have on its possessors, would not raise any opposition to it, but permit those desirous, to attend when they pleased. But it is otherwise;—every possible allurements is thrown in the way of the king and chiefs, to do away the good effects which the duties of the sanctuary are calculated to have on their minds, by those opposed to the gospel. We observe, however, that their overtures with the king to dine with them after sermon, have been promptly rejected. [Continued]

SPECIMEN OF WICLIF'S TRANSLATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The celebrated Dr. Wiclif (Wickliffe) was born about the year 1324. This was about the darkest period of the dark ages. Christianity had been

perverted to secular purposes, and corruption pervaded all parts of the Church. Wiclif, however, was a diligent student of the Bible. And as in this he pursued a singular course, so his mind was singularly enlightened by divine truth. The consequence was, that he detected and had courage to oppose the errors of the times. In the year 1372, he was elected Professor of Divinity in Oxford. His lectures attracted a vast concourse of pupils; and he was greatly admired and followed as a preacher. Endowed with *uncommon prudence*, as well as fervent piety, he did not at first *directly attack* the prejudices of the age in which he lived; nor did he in the pulpit delight in controversy. But he chose as the subject matter of his sermons, the doctrines and duties of Christianity. These he delivered in a plain, simple style, and urged them on the consciences of his hearers. In this way he gained mighty influence; and was enabled at length, to shake the foundation of the strong holds of clerical corruption. He has been beautifully as well as truly called "the Morning Star of the Reformation." He opposed in very numerous writings, most of the prevalent errors of the age: adopted a system of Theology very similar to that of the Reformers in their confession of faith. The ruling powers in the Church persecuted him sorely, but he was protected from personal violence by the friendship of many noblemen, and the zeal of the people. His enemies however succeeded in driving him from his College: on which event, he retired to his living; where he was enabled by his writings to assail the hierarchy. There were many efforts made to have him *treated as a heretic*; but while he was rousing opposition, & promoting reformation, it pleased the Sovereign of the universe in the year 1384, to remove him by disease, and thus

appoint the malice of those who had hunted for his life.

Wiclif translated the whole Bible into English; but only the new Testament has been published. We give the following extract from the late edition of this version by *Baber*, that our readers may see what the English language was in the year 1380. Our readers may now see Wiclif's prose and compare it with the version now in use, which it will be recollected, was made in the reign of James I. in the year 1610.

We have chosen as our Specimen, the parable of the good Samaritan.—LUKE x. 25—37.]

“And lo a wise man of the law roos up: temptinge him and seyinge, maister what thing schal I do to have euerlastinge lyf. And he seide to him what is writun in the Lawe? how redist thou? He answerde and seide, thou schalt loue thi Lord God of alle thin herte; and of alle thi soule and of alle thi strengthis, and of alle thi mynde, and thi neighbore as thi silf. And Jhesus seide to him thou hast answerde rightly, do this thing and thou schalt liue. But he willinge to justifie himself seide to Jhesus, & who is my neighbore? And Jhesus biheeld, and seide, a man came down fro Jerusalem into Jerico: and fel among theuys, and thei robbiden hym, and woundeden hym, and wenten away: and left the man half alyue. And it bifel that a prest cam douñ the same weye and passide forth whanne he hadde seyn him. Also a Dekene whanne he was bisidis the place and sigh him, passide forth. But a Samaritan goynge the weye came besidis him, and he sigh him and hadde reuthe on him: and cam to him and bond his woundis togidere and held in oyle and wyn, and leyde him on his beest, and ledde him into an ostrye; and dide the cure of him. And another day he broughte forth twie pens: and gaf it to the osteler, and

seide haue thou cure of him, and whateuer thou schalt give ouer: I schal yelde thee whanne I come agen. Who of these thre seemeth to thee: was neighbore to him that fel among theuys? And he seide, he that did mercy into him, and Jhesus seide to him go thou and do thou in lyk manner.”

We add the brief story of Martha and Mary in the same chapter.

And was doon while thei wenten he entride into a castel, and a woman Martha by name resevede him into hir hous. And to this was a sister Marye by name, which also sat besidis the feet of the Lord, and herde his word. But Martha bisiede aboute the ofte seruice, and sche stood and seide, Lord takest thou no kepe: that my Sister hath left me aloone to serue? therefore seye thou to hir, that sche helpe me. And the Lord answerde and seyde to hir, Martha, Martha, thou art busy: and art troublid aboutful manye thingis: But o thing is necessarye, Marye hath chosen the best part: which schal not be taken away fro hir.

Such we see are the changes which take place in living languages. Wiclif's version was made in the year 1380, and that now in use was completed in the year 1610; so that there was an interval of 230 years between them.

It will strike every reader, however, that the English language is much more fixed now than in former times. From the completion of the version now used until the present day, there have elapsed 213 years; and there are in that version but few obsolete or unintelligible words.

Evang. & Lit. Mag.

UNITED STATES AND ENGLAND.

The slanders contained in the English prints, particularly in the *Quarterly Review*, respecting the inhabitants of this country, have long been a matter of notoriety. This abuse

is the mere effusion of interest, and of bigotry. The prosperity of this country is a painful subject of contemplation for those who wish to see property, learning and enjoyment confined to their own island; though they might be willing, were we to become their colonists,—faithful hewers of wood and drawers of water for the mother country—to bestow a little commendation upon us. As it is, we are to expect no mercy at their hands. The bigots too are all against us,—the bigots in politics and religion. The ultra-royalists is scandalized at our audacity in making a constitution for ourselves, believing, with Louis the 18th, that a constitution, to be good for any thing, must be granted by some monarch. The ultra-churchman is willing to charge our want of an establishment upon our infidelity, and is surprised that we are blind to the manifold blessings of the tithe system. To Europe and to the world they make known their displeasure.

While we regret the exhibitions of prejudice, ignorance, and we may add, malice, furnished by some of the English writers, it affords us pleasure to be informed, of what, indeed, we already believed, that the most respectable portion of the British community give no credence to these slanders, and regret their publication. The following extract of a letter from a gentleman in England to his correspondent in this country, is proof of this fact, and will be read with pleasure by those who are desirous that the friendly relations of the two countries should be permanent. This extract was first published in the *Gospel Advocate*. *Rel. Int.*

"I much rejoice to trace the dawn of a more kindly feeling between our two countries. In this country, more especially, a more just estimate of America is every day gaining ground and there are many who avail themselves of every opportunity to fan

those feelings of warmth and cordiality which are now often visible in the best society here.

"The Quarterly Review is much blamed and reprobated by many even of those of the same party politics. Its scurrility is really disgraceful.

"I lately received a letter from Mrs. Hannah Moore, in which she says 'I forgot whether I told you in my last, that I had spoken to Lord Sidmouth, who visited me at that time, of the shameful conduct of some of our newspapers, reviews, &c. in their unwarrantable treatment of America. He expressed the utmost indignation, and said it was highly offensive in itself, and dangerous in its consequences. I since spoke to another man in power who said he wished much to check it.'

"In a note which I received the other day from Mr. Wilbeforce, he says, 'I can scarcely express, in language sufficiently strong to do justice to my feelings, the indignation I feel at the attempts I sometimes witness, to produce a mutual spirit of alienation between the inhabitants of this country and the United States, and my endeavors are used to the utmost to cultivate a mutual spirit of good will between them.'

"I think you will be gratified by these extracts, as demonstrating the feelings of those whose feelings you would most regard."

NEW-ENGLAND CONFERENCE.

The Conference rose last evening, after a laborious session of eight days. Great harmony prevailed among the members, and much business was transacted. One hundred and fifty-one preachers were appointed to itinerate in the various stations and circuits, for the year ensuing. Besides these there are upwards of two hundred local preachers in this Conference, and three superannuated preachers. The whole number of commu-

nicants is about 21,000. The increase during the last year was nearly 1000.

During the sitting of the Conference in this town, there has been a prayer-meeting in the morning, and preaching and divine service in the afternoon and evening of each day. The preachers have been earnest and faithful, and the congregations numerous, serious and attentive; and we doubt not that these exertions will be followed by a blessing from on high.

The Wesleyan Missionaries at the Shetland Isles have met with much success among that neglected people. On the 5th of January, which the natives observe as Old Christmas, they came in flocks on the Island of Burra to hear the Gospel.—Formerly this day was kept by them in rioting and drunkenness. *Zion's Her.*

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From the R. I. R. Intelligencer.

REVIVAL AT MARTHA'S VINEYARD,
MASSACHUSETTS.

Letter from the Rev. John Whittlesey, to the Editor, dated June 16th, 1823.

Mr. Badger,

I have felt much gratified, as well as profited, in the perusal of your religious paper: and feeling sensible you take a deep interest in the spread of the Gospel, I take the liberty to give you an account of the most wonderful work of the Lord upon the hearts of the people upon Martha's Vineyard; the particulars of which I learned upon a recent visit to that place. Two years ago, Rev. John Adams was stationed on that Island by the New-England Conference, where, notwithstanding some opposition, he and his "help mete," have labored for the good of souls with unwearied zeal and remarkable success. Blessed be God, their labor has not been in vain in the Lord. About two

hundred, as near as I can learn, have been happy subjects of the work. Upwards of one hundred have been added to the Methodist Church, some to the Baptist and a few to the Congregational; and a number more have not as yet connected themselves with any particular denomination. The work still progresses and there is a prospect of its continuance. It has not been confined to any one grade of people—the high, the low, the rich, the poor, the noble and ignoble, have shared in the work.

CARLISLE, JULY 4.

FOURTH OF JULY.

We congratulate our patrons on the return of another anniversary of the Independence of our country. A day, which must be held in grateful remembrance by every American, and particularly by every American christian. This country was first settled by persons who resorted to its shore, to find *Christian Liberty*; content rather to endure the privations attending a settlement in an entire wilderness, far from home; to leave kindred and every kindred tie;—affluence and ease, that they might be permitted to *worship God*, according to the dictates of their consciences, under their own vine and fig tree, no person to interrupt or molest.—After a series of years, when the little family of devoted pilgrims had increased to an interesting extent, these liberties were again threatened;—the liberties which had already cost so dear! With hearts conscious of the evils already endured under the hand of an oppressor, they boldly assert their freedom; and hence this anniversary. We all know the result of that declaration. We are in duty bound to keep this day with grateful recollection of the event it calls to mind. But let us not celebrate it as a festival of some idol deity. Let us not in professing to honor it, bow at the shrine of Bacchus and own *him* as our deliverer. Let no professors of religion so much dishonor their master as to join in with those, who in this manner, would perpetuate its memory. Let none of them raise their shouts of joy to the passing wind; instead of raising them to the rightful sove-

reign. But let us repair to the sanctuary of that God, who alone can hear and deliver us, and offer our thanks to him in the soft aspiration of prayer and praise. Then our devotions will appear sincere;—but, as long as it is celebrated with its wonted hilarity, around the flowing bowl, we must consider it as opposed to the gospel of Christ, and contrary to a profession of the Christian religion.

Divine worship will be held in the Methodist Church, to-day at 10 o'clock.

In two weeks the first half year of our labors will be finished; a few having subscribed for *six months*, and those generally on conditions that if they were pleased with the work they would continue to receive it; we think it our duty to inform them of the time their term will expire. Those of them who have complied with the terms of the paper, have only to leave directions with us, as to their determination, and we shall act accordingly;—those who have not paid the advance money, are informed that discharging it will be a necessary pre-requisite to having it discontinued. In case of neglect in any of these particulars, we shall take it for granted that they are pleased with our performance, and of course intend to continue their patronage.

All who did not state particularly the time for which they subscribed, are considered as patrons for the year.

COMMUNICATED.

On Wednesday the 25th ult., the annual Commencement of Dickinson College, was held in the Presbyterian Church. At a quarter before ten in the morning—the Board of Trustees, the Faculty and Students with a number of citizens and strangers, formed in procession, at the College Chapel, and passed to the church.*

Nineteen young men of whom the class was comprised, were admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts, viz. J. Holmes Agnew, Alfred Armstrong, George W. Bethune, Ira C. Boice, William H. Cahoon, jr. A. H.

*See last number for order of exercise,

Codwise, Wm. L. Helfenstein, Jas. Holmes, Talbot Jones, A. J. Labagh, I. Labagh, D. M'Kinley, E. Mason, J. G. Morris, Digby B.D. Smith, C. Van Cleef, C. Whitehead, Wm. H. Williams, and John C. Young.

The Degree of Master of Arts was conferred on Alfred Foster, M. D. Alexander Brackenridge, Esq. James Hamilton, Esq. Thomas Kelly, Esq. and John D. Mahon, Esq.

Alumni of the Institution.

The honorary degree of Master of Arts, on Adam Hays, M. D. and the degree of D. D. on Philip Lindsley, V. P. of Nassau Hall.

It must have been peculiarly gratifying, to all the friends of the youth, and the Institution, to observe in these first fruits of Dickinson College such rich promise of future usefulness. The pieces delivered were all excellent in their kind, conferring honor on the youth, as well for their sound sense and correct sentiments, as for the ease and beauty of their style. Such specimens of composition, and such independence of thought, speak much in favor of the general system of education adopted by their professors—and especially of that care that is manifested in relation to their studies in Polite Literature. To the religious public, it will be pleasing intelligence to hear that out of the 19 who composed this class all except *three* have professed the religion of Jesus Christ, and devoted themselves to his service before their entrance on the world. The friends of the Institution and the inhabitants of the place could not but be highly gratified, at the large concourse of strangers that attended to witness the exercises of Commencement. Among them we discovered the Rev. Dr. *Ashbael Green*, and Dr. *N. W. Chapman*, of Philadelphia. The character of the exhibition, & the general interest manifested in the Institution prove its growing usefulness and promise its future prosperity.

Editors at a distance friendly to Literature are requested to give publicity to the above.

For the Miscellany.

Messrs. Editors,

I must congratulate you on the success I find you have had in starting your paper in this place. The establishment of Religious Newspapers through our country are producing a vast deal of benefit to the community at large. They not only turn the taste of the young inquirer to religious information, but edify every sincere christian, who can rejoice at hearing of the gospel's triumph. From some facts, though, which lately came to my knowledge, I am persuaded that a much greater patronage might, and should be obtained, were christians alive to their own interest. There are about 3000 families in Cumberland county, one third of which are able to take a paper without ever feeling the loss of the price. Now, I apprehend that not one half of this number take a newspaper, much less your very instructive one. I do not see on what principles they can withhold their patronage from a paper, calculated to have so good a tendency on the members of their families. They cannot plead that it is too sectarian, or that it is encumbered with advertisements; if they have any thing to advance in extenuation of their conduct, it is, that they do not wish to promote the spread of religious truth. I shall relate to you a conversation, which took place between me and my neighbor the other day, and I presume, many in our county, are equally culpable in the same respect. I stepped into a neighbor's the other day and saluted him with, well neighbor, what's the news?

Neighbor—I have seen nothing new in the papers which I have been looking over. They are filled with

electioneering stuff, of so much sameness they are hardly worth having. One paper assures us, that Mr. Gregg will be elected, and the next affirms, that Mr. Shulze will receive a majority. We cannot believe them both.

I—What news, though, in the religious world? I like to hear about the thing that most concerns me. As to the elections, I do not take any part in them; and of course am not troubled about them. I have not received my paper this week.

Neighbor—As to religious news, sir, I cannot accommodate you with any. I sent to neighbor L—'s to get the loan of the Miscellany, but he said he had not read it himself, and could not lend it till he had perused it—and

I—But don't you take the Miscellany?

Neighbor—No: I have not yet subscribed;—and I have so many papers already, I cannot think of taking any more. I take no less than three.

I—I am sorry to find that you have so far come short of what a christian would be expected to do. Take no less than three political papers, which are filled with personal abuse, from week to week, and which are calculated to injure the taste of young children, more than improve them in reading. You should be ashamed to own it.

Neighbor—Your remarks are just; yet things are not so bad. I get the loan of the paper from Mr. L. and by this means you see, I have the reading of it for nothing.

I—Yes, but by borrowing it do you assist in supporting an establishment of so much interest to the community; or do your children receive any benefit from it?

Neighbor—We receive none of these advantages; but I intend shortly to relinquish some I at present receive, and take the religious paper.

I—Be that as you please. If you are

able to take three, you are able to take four. But I must confess they are of little benefit. Go; let it not be said you have done nothing for perpetuating the spread of Religious Intelligence through our country. Good bye.

—•—
For the Miscellany.

ANNUAL REPORT OF BIG SPRING SABBATH SCHOOL.

An annual meeting of the Sabbath School, in the Borough of Newville, was held on Friday evening the 27th of June 1823, for the purpose of appointing Managers, Teachers, &c. for the ensuing year. The object of the meeting having been stated and an address delivered, Managers and Teachers were appointed for one year.

A committee being appointed to make out the annual report, met agreeably to appointment: It was agreed, that the annual report together with the address, be published in the Religious Miscellany.

Although the Institution has not flourished for the past year so as to meet the wishes of the managers, yet the committee are able to report as follows, viz:

Aggregate amount of Verses of Scripture, Psalms, & Hymns, Pages of Catechism, &c. 22473.

It may reasonably be expected that the usefulness of the Institution will be more extended than heretofore, owing to the measures that have been entered into for its regulation in future.

Attest—JOHN Y. DAVIDSON,
Recording Secretary.

ADDRESS.

In directing our thoughts to the subject of the Sabbath School, it will be proper to observe, that like many other important institutions for the welfare and happiness of the human race, it requires some considerable time and experience to bring it to

that degree of perfection, which will render it subservient to the various objects, which its worthy founders had in view. Not only the lisping youths who may be snatched from the abode of midnight (moral) darkness, living and growing up in absolute ignorance of the author of their being, and of all their mercies; but likewise the Teacher who has engaged in this work of faith and labor of love, will be convinced of his need of that wisdom which is from above, to enable him or her to see with some degree of clearness, that narrow path in which they would lead others,—“Least while they be teachers, they themselves be cast away.”

It is not my intention here, nor is it in my power to enumerate *all* the advantages resulting from a well regulated and properly conducted Sabbath School; but I cannot refrain from mentioning some facts which I know from actual observation:—And in the first place, it might be proper to observe, that the practice of late rising on Sabbath mornings, is almost as general as it is inconsistent with every principle of christianity, because, it is clearly implied in that command, “Thou shalt not do any work,” that all waste of time by unnecessary indulgences are as sinful as recreations on this Holy day are; for which christians will have to account. Let it not be said, that Sabbath Schools are not calculated to correct this indolent practice, for at least one half of the exercises of the day precedes public worship, & it is necessary that both teachers & taught be up as early on that, as on any other; the one to attend to those works of necessity and mercy, which must more or less engage the attention of all who are in any measure arrived to years of discretion; the other stimulated by a laudable principle of ambition, will be up betimes endeavoring to commit to memory

those sacred words which fell from the hallowed lips of him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

The next and most important benefit resulting from Sabbath Schools, is the facility afforded to all, of becoming acquainted with the Sacred Oracles, which alone are able to make us wise unto salvation. There are some it is true, from reasons best known to themselves, who treat this benevolent institution with contempt, as though they could frown it into annihilation! but let all such know, that God has in various instances, most signally sealed his approbation of it, to the glory of his grace, in the salvation of numbers, who, to all human appearance had lived and would have died willing subjects of the powers of darkness.

To those who have no reasons for not sending their children to Sabbath School, but just that they care for none of these things, I would call upon in the name of that God, who has given them children, to consider what they do, ere it be too late. The God of Heaven has entrusted you with the management of immortal souls, and has brought you under the most solemn obligations, to train them up in the "Nurture and admonition of the Lord," in that he has been pleased to appoint your lot in a land of gospel light, while many of our wretched race, instigated by that arch enemy of God and man, with their own unnatural hands, do cause the blood of their helpless and innocent offspring to stain the footstool of God, in order to appease their abominable deities. You also should consider, your obligation to your Creator, in that you are not endeavoring to satisfy an angry God, by unmeaning, abominable, pernicious and superstitious idolatry;—you are called upon to believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and worship him in spirit and

in truth. But why need I multiply arguments to urge you to the duty of doing every thing in your power, and embracing all opportunities of having your children instructed in the knowledge of God? You no doubt love them, and if so, can you sit contented while they are strangers to Christ—without God and without hope in the world—growing apace, as children of wrath fitted for destruction? O! how must it aggravate your own sufferings, to think that your children must suffer through an endless eternity, in consequence of your wicked neglect. As for those who say they can teach their children at home, and see no necessity of sending them to such places, I would ask what evidence they can give that they do so; nay, I would venture to assert, that with few exceptions, you will rarely miss them or their children off the streets, and even if they do continue to confine them to the house and their books, the labor becomes extremely burthensome both to parents and children; and I challenge any, nay *all* the opposers of Sabbath Schools, to produce an instance of a child committing the same number of verses or hymns, notwithstanding the most strenuous and laborious exertions at home; that numbers have been known to do for those rewards and distinctions which are held out as stimulations to Sabbath School scholars. In this is demonstrated that old Proverb, "Iron sharpeneth Iron" and the little competitors will do *more*, and to better purpose, for the sake of reward and distinction at school, than for all that can be done with them, secluded with their parents at home.

But as I have mentioned before, *it must take time*, to convince and reconcile *every* person to these things. When the system is once matured and flourishing, there is no calculating the beneficial effects of a well directed zeal. And it is most earnestly to

be hoped, that these causes of complaint, which have heretofore existed, be guarded against by all possible assiduity; so that our enemies shall be constrained to confess its usefulness. And it is also to be hoped, and expected, that all who have united themselves with this philanthropic institution, will be diligent at a throne of grace, imploring that wisdom, which will enable them to discharge their several duties with profit and with pleasure. It is a most pleasing fact, that while the superintendants and teachers of schools, devote that portion of every Lord's day to the instruction of youth, which they otherwise might spend in reading and resting from the labors of the week, they are at the same time acquiring a familiarity and acquaintance with those christian truths, and the duties connected with them, which scarcely any other circumstances would afford; and which will greatly conduce to make them useful and intelligent members of the church of Christ.

Go on, then, my young friends, and be not soon weary in well doing.—You may have your days of small things;—you may have darkness for a night, but joy cometh in the morning;—you may expect to meet with the opposition of lukewarm professors, and the supercilious contempt of the wordly wise:—But, be not dismayed; go on in the strength of God the Lord; your cause is the cause of Christ, and the glory of his kingdom. Although you may be as sheep among wolves, yet they that are for you, are more than all that are against you. And may that peace of conscience which is the reward of virtue and holiness;—that joy in the Holy Ghost, which will bear you up under all trials, be your constant companion and protector!

For the Miscellany.

It is certainly a striking proof of the sacred origin of the Christian re-

ligion, that every deviation from its simplicity as delineated in the Bible has ever tended only to its corruption; yet its enemies have been solicitous to draw from this very quarter a contrary inference. "What a dreadful catalogue of evils" they say, "must be referred to what you fondly term the source of peace and the fountain of all love! not to speak of the bitter persecutions, the exterminating wars, and the rancors of hatred which it has engendered in different periods of the world, has it not a direct tendency to enslave the mind, to pervert the affections of the heart and destroy all the finer sensibilities of our nature? Is it not ever liable so degenerate into enthusiasm or superstition and consequently answerable for all the evils of both? Is it not calculated to be the most formidable engine of tyranny, the lurking place of intrigue, and the scaling ladder of ambition? Look to the long continued despotism of papal Rome, consider the abject condition of Christendom for centuries; mark the origin, the progress, and the consummation of ecclesiastical usurpation, and own that your religion is an artfully devised fable, the disguise of villainy and the bug-bear of folly!"

Such are the reasonings of infidelity, founded ever on the slippery basis of falsehood and sophistry! It refuses to discriminate between the reality and name, but blending the spotless institutions of Deity with the superincumbencies of human invention, dooms them to one undistinguishing anathema. As well might the sceptic call into question the propriety of civil government always liable to abuse, or the utility of the most important arts capable of being converted to a bad purpose. It is the aberration from, and not the adherence to the principles of the Bible which becomes the engendering cause of the evils he deprecates in religion;

and this fact goes far in establishing its claim to a derivation from God. Government degenerated into despotism or anarchy, is government no longer, and religion gliding into enthusiasm or superstition ceases to be religion altogether.

But how is it that Religion may be said to be ever apt to degenerate into superstition? Is there any natural connexion existing between them? Is their relation of antecedent and consequent immutably fixed? Surely not. And yet as once before observed, mankind have ever discovered a propensity to amend the institutions of Heaven, and thus gradually subject themselves to the influence of superstition even when operated upon by the dictates of an honest but erroneous conscience. Still there cannot be found any imperfection in these institutions to justify this principle or call forth its exertion; the Law of the Lord is perfect and we must look elsewhere for its occasion. God in all his intercourse with man disclaims any obligation of kindness towards him.

He proceeds on the ground of free, sovereign, and unmerited grace, nor can he consistently with his holiness accept any partial obedience as merit, where perfect obedience was required as duty, much less can he be satisfied with any external acts of obedience where that of the heart is denied. But although a price of debt and of merit has been already paid, and as far as regards man the riches of the Gospel are offered without money and without price, it is not easy for him to forget all pretensions of desert and look for the favor of heaven without some corresponding offering of imaginary service on his own part. Hence, he is induced to perform services which were never required as expressions of more than required zeal, forgetting that could they have been of any avail in the sight of God, they had most certainly been required. In proportion as he rests not satisfied

with the obedience of his heart, will he be disposed to multiply rites and ceremonies, and seek to still the clamors of conscience by external observances till his religion becomes a mere form of endless superstition.

Thus religious superstition originates in the self-righteousness of the creature and not in the nature of true piety. And when once it has acquired a footing it is not difficult to account for its continuance and growth. Education, habit, the sanction of time, and the imposition of authority gradually establish its influence, and reduce it to all the consistency and all the stability of a system. It marches onward with emboldened step, spreading desolation and terror around while ignorance close following in the train secures all its conquests and mantles all its deformity.

How deeply implanted in the human breast must be the conviction of the truth of religion, when it is permitted to sanction all the absurdities & all inconsistencies which have been so often blended with it! such ought to be our reflection when we contemplate this subject and not the unreasonable suggestions of unbelief. Will the human mind endure the same grossness of deception when presented through any other avenue? Can the usurpations of tyranny derive equal security from any other source? Or could the vast fabric of papal superstition ever have been reared on any other foundation? No. Look to the hierarchy of Rome, consider attentively its corruption and its oppression, mark well its nature & its operations, remember the periods of darkness & ignorance, & own that the essential principle of its preservation, could only have been derived from Heaven!

JULIUS.

Near Shippensburg, 1823.

ANECDOTE.

THE SHEPHERD & THE INFIDEL.

A traveller from a commercial house in London, crossing the extensive

plains in Wiltshire, was joined by a gentleman passing the same road. The traveller, a pious man, observed, with regret, that the conversation of the stranger was of a light and trifling cast, often bordering on profanity, and resolved to take the first opportunity of slipping away from so unprofitable a companion. Before, however such an opportunity occurred, they reached a part of the down where the road separated; uncertain which way to take, they proposed to inquire of a shepherd boy, who was reclining near the spot with a book in his hand. The stranger, disposed to exercise his profligate wit on the simple peasant, thus addressed him:

"Halloo! my lad, what book are you reading?"

"The Bible, sir," was the reply.

"The Bible! so! what, you read that in hopes to find out the way to heaven?"

"Yes sir."

"Very well—that road I neither know nor care any thing about; you tell me, if you can, the road to Salisbury, and I will leave you to dream about the other at your leisure."

"That," (pointing with his crook) "is the road to Salisbury; and the road to heaven, blessed be God, is so plain that "the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

"Well said, simple shepherd," thought the pious traveller; and raised his thoughts in gratitude to the "Lord of heaven and earth, who hath hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes;" and thus, out of the mouth of the weak and mean, in other respects, hath ordained strength to still the enemy and the avenger."

Children, who are taught to read and revere the sacred Scriptures, perhaps you may, at some time or other, meet with those who fancy they show their learning and wit by attempting to shake your faith, and ridicule the blessed book on which it is built; but

regard them not; they can never disprove a single letter of its sacred contents. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the Saviour's words shall never pass away. See that they dwell in you richly in all wisdom, that you may be ready to "give to every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." All the shafts of infidel wit shall fall harmless at your feet, if you are by grace enabled to say, "I know in whom I have believed; and am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."—S. S. M.

—*—*—
For the Miscellany.

WHITHER IS MY BELOVED GONE?

Solomon's Song, vi. 1.

"Where," says the soul who once was fed
With living manna from above,
"Where has my much beloved fled,
Leaving me helpless here to rove?"

"Where shall I go to seek my spouse?
To vallies in sequestered woods?
Or shall I rove the mountain brows,
Or course the murmuring chrystal flood?"

No! There my true-love ne'er retires;
His walks are on a loftier road;—
He roves where love's illum'ning fires,
Point the inquirer to his God.

Go to his WORD, you'll find him there;
Use the appointed means of Grace;
Seek him in all-prevailing prayer,
Haply he'll turn, and show his face.

Intreat him, and he'll soon return;—
Tell him you love his suits the best;—
Tell him, your soul for him doth mourn;
He will appear to give you rest. F

NOTICE. An adjourned meeting of the board of managers of the Cumberland County Bible Society, is to be held at the house of Robert M'Cord, on Monday 7th inst. at three o'clock, P. M.

Departed this life on Wednesday evening last, Miss CORNELIA BRACKENRIDGE, daughter of the late Judge Brackenridge deceased, of this borough.

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CARLISLE.